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Letter to the Editor by Thomas Helke

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On June 26, the U.S. House passed one of the most potentially damaging bills to ever reach the House floor. The American Clean Energy and Security Act (H.R. 2454), also known as "cap and trade," is essentially a tax on energy producers. While the intent is to reduce greenhouse gases while eliminating dependence on foreign oil, it will accomplish neither. And you and I will be paying for this massive intrusion in increased energy costs.

Estimates of this bill's potential cost to the consumer have ranged anywhere from \$300 to \$3,100 per year. U.S. Rep. Jason Altmire, D-McCandless, stood in opposition to his party and voted against this bill, stating it "would raise energy prices for Western Pennsylvania families." We should all commend Altmire for doing what many politicians forget is their job -- to stand up for their constituents.

Familiarize yourself with the details of this bill and voice your opinion to Sen. Arlen Specter and Sen. Bob Casey. We cannot afford more taxes and higher energy prices while our economy is in turmoil.

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